

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1479
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

Correction of Underweight and Overweight by Exercise

C. O. Benson

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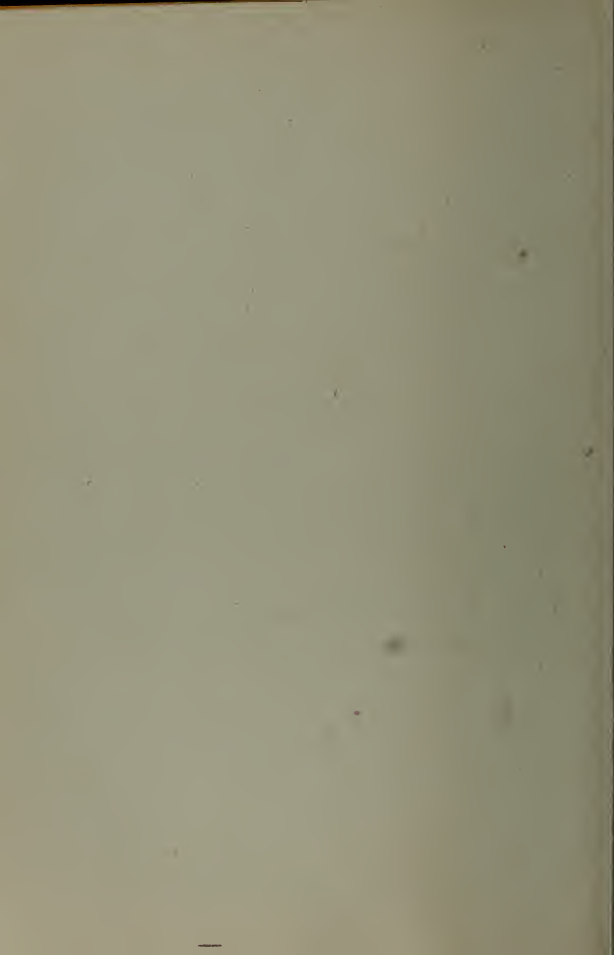
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CORRECTION OF UNDERWEIGHT AND OVERWEIGHT BY EXERCISE

About one-fifth of the American people are burdened with overweight. This is a tragedy, for excessive weight is an impediment to an active, vigorous, and normal life. It is not only a threat to health, but it also decreases the chance for longevity. While this portion of the book is prepared for those who are overweight and wish to reduce, it must be said that prevention of overweight is much better than a cure. Young adults who recognize the first warning of overweight should at once revise their manner of living as regards diet and exercise, so as to keep the body within normal limits.

The first step in production of overweight is the lessening of activity and exercise. With this comes the deposition of fats around and in the vital organs of the body which may cause interference with the action of the heart, kidneys and blood vessels. This added fat lays a mechanical stress and strain on all the organs, not to mention the deadly strain on

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the eliminating organs. Disease of these organs is a common accompaniment of overweight.

Generally when men break down we ascribe it to over-work. It is over-work, but not over-work of the brain and nerves, but rather over-work of the stomach, liver and kidneys. Very few physically healthy men and women are in such danger of ever breaking down from over-work even though they labor most strenuously and ceaselessly.

Most cases of overweight are first noticed about the twenty-fifth year. Chief among the causative factors is the leading of a sedentary, inactive life in which over-eating and under-exercising play an important part. With this comes an accumulation of fat which tends to become a permanent fixture unless the style of living is immediately changed. Thus, the body accommodates itself to this added weight burden which curtails activity and makes further increases in weight easy. In some persons, however, disease of the glands of internal secretion causes overweight.

Overweight means too much food or too little exercise, or both. As people grow older they cut down their activity and exercise but at the

same time their appetite for food continues or even increases. Thus, less and less of the food they take in the body is burned up in work, and more and more is stored in the form of fat. There is a strain upon the heart for every pound the person puts on above the normal weight. Such overweight is about equally prevalent among women and men.

It is very fortunate indeed that overweight in almost every case can be controlled. Even the hereditary tendency to overweight which sometimes makes the struggle seem hopeless can be overcome in most cases.

Since overweight is brought on chiefly by overeating and under-exercising, we can reverse this process to the limits of safety which vary with the individual and have its correction.

Reduced eating does not mean starvation, but merely means control of the appetite and the avoidance of the concentrated portion of the diet.

In regard to the diet, it would be advisable to consult a physician, but it is also advisable to go lightly on sugar, butter, cream, fats, pastry, sweets, olive oil, etc. Meals should be light and frequent rather than hearty and in-

frequent. A light breakfast is advisable. One or two poached eggs, weak tea or coffee, hardly any sugar, with a very small quantity of bread and butter. For luncheon and dinner meat should be eaten in moderate portions, and celery, spinach, lettuce, string beans, turnips, and other bulky vegetables of low food value may be taken if desired.

It must be said at this point that increased mental work does not mean increased diet, but increased physical work means increased diet.

The plan of dieting and weight reduction is to eliminate the concentrated, starchy and fatty foods and substitute bulky foods which contain less fat producing qualities, but which give adequate nourishment and satisfy the appetite.

Concentrated foods which are fat forming are grouped into three classes: First, oils, such as vegetable oil, nuts, cream, butter, etc. Second, sweets and sugars. Third, starchy foods as pastry, bread, etc. A highly concentrated food is a piece of bread and butter.

Eating between meals is very largely responsible for many cases of overweight, and this is especially true of those who cook the food in the home. However, of all the foods taken

between meals, candy is the worse. A few harmless pieces of candy may contain more calories than a large meal. The habit of eating only three meals a day should be the first step in one's reduction scheme. Candy should be eaten as a dessert.

The non-fat forming foods are bulky vegetables, fruits, lean meat, fish and fowl without fat, etc.

REDUCING DRUGS

Reducing drugs as advertised make wildly extravagant claims—claims that are impossible of substantiation, for they nearly always promise to reduce without dieting or exercising. This cannot be done unless dangerous drugs are employed. All sorts of soap, powders, rollers, breads, are usually a scheme purely to make money. They are either useless, dangerous, or both.

HOW TO REDUCE SANELY

In order to reduce sanely, four things must be done.

First, a thorough physical examination by a competent physician which means do not try to reduce without consulting a physician or

specialist. Second, a diet should be planned from time to time so as to give adequate reduction and provide satisfactory nourishment. Third, determination of the time one will take in eliminating overweight. It must be remembered that determination and persistence are the very essence of success in weight reduction. Unless one determines at the outset to follow the matter through, it is quite well never to begin. The fourth step, and the one that I am particularly interested in, is the exercises suitable for weight reduction. It must be remembered that more care in reducing is necessary with older persons and with individuals whose overweight is of long standing than with ones who have recently acquired extra weight.

A group of exercises will be found later on in this book. Indulging in these exercises daily and a planned diet will eliminate overweight eventually. Through proper exercise excessive weight is burned up and gotten rid of. Exercise in the open air is especially beneficial to the health. It is imperative to follow the prescribed calisthenics for ten or twenty minutes each day in addition to such out-of-door activity as can be included.

One of the best exercises for overweight

people is walking and a brisk tramp of three or four miles a day will work wonders. However, if you get fatigued or breathless, begin with shorter distances and work up to longer ones.

It must be remembered that a daily movement of the bowels is essential for good health and it is very important for one undertaking a weight reducing regime. You will find, however, that the prescribed calisthenics will stimulate the bowels to some extent. Movement of the bowels will be stimulated naturally by proper exercise and diet. Laxatives and drugs should never be used except upon advice of a competent physician. A daily evening hot bath aids in cleansing that great organ of elimination of poison, the skin. After taking your morning exercises a shower or tub bath should be taken for two minutes with the temperature of the water between 95 and 100 degrees for cleansing purposes. This should be followed by a quick, cold sponge rub over the entire body. Dry with a rough towel until the skin glows. This should be followed by a cold wet towel rubbed on the abdomen for a few minutes until the abdomen attains a reddish glow. Then dry the body thoroughly, dress quickly and you will have a keen appetite for

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the morning meal, and be ready to start the day off in the proper manner.

Before going into exercises that are weight reducing, it must be remembered that over-exercise is as harmful as under-exercise. I will plan the first week's exercises in order that you will become accustomed to physical work. After that time pick any exercises from the general group and plan your program.

EXERCISES

Monday

Exercise 1.

Position: Body erect, arms at side.

Action: Slowly inhale and raise arms sideways, palms downward until level with shoulders. Turn palms upward and continue to raise arms until same extend upward from the shoulders. Slowly reverse movement and exhale. Do this five times.

Exercise 2.

Position: Stand erect with head up and shoulders squared with hands on hips.

Action: Bend body right and left from the erect position. Be sure to bend at the waist only. There should be no motion in the legs and the head and neck should be kept in the same relative position as in the position of attention. This exercise can be done with the feet together or apart. Bend six times to each side.

Exercise 3.

Position: Sitting on floor, legs straight together in front of body. Back should be straight with hands resting on floor.

Action: Bend knee placing the left foot on the floor near the seat. Return left leg to normal position and repeat with the right leg. Repeat exercise eight times with both legs.

Exercise 4.

Position: Stand erect with arms at sides.

Action: Raise arms over head at the same time raising on the toes. See how high you can reach. Hold position a few seconds; then return arms and feet to the normal position. Repeat exercise ten times.

Exercise 5.

Position: Lying on floor with hands at sides.

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Action: Raise arms above head on floor. Inhale. Try to draw ~~the~~ abdominal contents into the chest; at the ~~same~~ time see how long you can make yourself. Return to the normal position slowly and ~~exhale~~. Repeat exercise eight times.

You are now ready ~~for~~ your morning bath.

Tuesday

Exercise 1.

Repeat Exercise 5 of Monday's group.

Exercise 2.

Position: Sitting ~~on~~ floor with hands on hips, feet spread.

Action: Reach forward with left hand and touch right foot. Repeat with right hand on left foot. At first, you will probably not be able to touch the feet ~~but~~ reach forward as far as possible. Repeat ~~exercise~~ ten times with each hand.

Exercise 3.

Position: Body erect—arms sideways shoulder level.

Action: Turn body ~~right~~ as far as possible

at the same time swizzing the arms. Return to normal position and twist body left. Return to normal position. Do this exercise quickly, trying to twist from the hips only. Repeat exercise ten times.

Exercise 4.

Position: Body erect, hands on neck with the finger tips touching each other. Elbows extended sideways and held back with the shoulders held down.

Action: Bend the neck backward as far as possible, keeping chin in, and return to normal position. Do this four times,

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect, with hands above head. Elbows, straight and palms facing each other. Feet together.

Action: Bend to the left. Return to normal position and bend to the right. Bending should be done from the hips only. The arms should be in the same relative position all through the exercise, that is, parallel with the body. Stretch as high as possible while doing this exercise five times to each side.

Exercise 6.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Wednesday

Exercise 1.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Exercise 2.

Position: Hands on hips, body erect, feet together.

Action: Bend trunk slowly forward as far as possible. Return trunk to normal position, then bend backward not too far. Return trunk to starting position. Repeat exercise ten times.

Exercise 3.

Position: Sitting on floor, hands on hips, body erect.

Action: Reach forward with both hands and touch toes, keeping knees straight. If you are unable to touch your toes do not become discouraged. However, reach forward as far as possible. Continue exercise ten times.

Exercise 4.

Position: Lying on floor face downward. Hands above head on floor.

Action: Stretch as long as possible. Raise hands and feet simultaneously as high as possible keeping knees and elbows straight. Hold a few seconds and return to normal position. Repeat exercise five times.

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect, hands clasped behind neck.

Action: Twist body to the left as far as possible, twisting at hips only. Return to normal position. Repeat to the right. Do this exercise six times to each side.

Exercise 6.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Thursday

Exercise 1.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Exercise 2.

Position: Stand erect with arms at sides.

Action: Bend trunk left with the left hand touching as far below the knee as possible without twisting the trunk, which means bend directly sideways. Repeat to the right side with the right hand. Bend six times in each direction.

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Exercise 3.

Position: Lying on floor with hands above head, knees straight.

Action: Raise feet six inches off the floor, keeping knees straight. Hold a few seconds and return to normal position. Do this exercise four times.

Exercise 4.

Position: Hands on hips, body erect.

Action: Twist body to the left slowly. Be sure that body rotates from the hips only and that there is no motion in the legs. Twist as far as possible, keeping an erect position. Repeat to the right side. Continue exercise five times to each side.

Exercise 5.

Position: Lying on back on floor. Hands at sides legs straight with the weight of from two to four pounds on the abdomen.

Action: Breathe slowly and deeply. The abdomen should rise and fall rhythmically as you breathe. Repeat exercise for five minutes.

Friday

Exercise 1.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Exercise 2.

Position: Lying on back on floor, hands at sides, legs straight.

Action: Arch the body upward forming a bridge with the weight resting on the heels and shoulders. Hold position a few seconds. Return to normal. Form a bridge six times.

Exercise 3.

Position: Hands on hips, body erect.

Action: Bend trunk forward, back straight, left sideways, backward, right sideways, and forward, thus making a complete circle. Avoid rotation of the body. Make a complete circle three times.

Exercise 4.

Position: Body erect, hands on hips.

Action: Raise the right knee so that thigh is parallel with floor and the lower leg at an angle of 90 degrees with the thigh. The toes should be depressed and pointed to the floor as much as possible. This position should be held a few seconds before returning to normal position. Repeat with left leg. Raise each knee six times.

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect, arms sideways shoulder high, elbows straight.

Action: Bend trunk forward so that back

is parallel with floor. Spine should be straight and not curved. Return to upright position. Arms retain the same relative position throughout exercise. Bend forward six times.

Exercise 6.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Saturday

Exercise 1.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Exercise 2.

Position: Lie flat on the floor, face downward with feet extended and arms folded across back.

Action: Raise head and turn it to right; then to left. Return to normal position. Repeat six times.

Exercise 3.

Position: Hands on shoulders, elbows shoulder high and in plane with the body. Feet two feet apart.

Action: Lower body forward slowly to an angle of 90 degrees with the legs. The head, neck, and back should be straight and rigid with the bend at the waist only. This is a difficult exercise and attention to form is necessary. Repeat five times.

Exercise 4.

Position: Hands on hips, body erect.

Action: The body should be raised first on toes, and then by bending the knees, the body should be lowered. The back should be perpendicular to the floor during the whole movement, and in no instance should the head and body be allowed to tip forward. Go through this exercise slowly endeavoring to keep evenly balanced. Repeat exercise six times.

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect with hands clasped behind neck, elbows shoulder high and well back.

Action: Press head backward as far as possible, keeping the chin in. Return to normal position. While doing this exercise, keep spine straight and draw the chest up as high as possible. Try to draw the abdominal organs into the chest cavity. Repeat six times.

Exercise 6.

Position: Stand erect, with chest up, chin in.

Action: Bend or sway from side to side, moving only from the hips. The arms should wave loosely like the branches of a tree. Continue exercise for three minutes.

Exercise 7.

Repeat breathing exercise.

Sunday

Exercise 1.

Since Sunday provides a splendid opportunity to hike and tramp a few miles or participate in some form of game or contest, it is advisable to refrain from the formal exercises I have given in favor of an outdoor program.

At this point you are expected to plan your own program of exercise. Give yourself enough work so as to burn up the excess fat. After the physician examines your case, good hard work may be required from two weeks to one year, before you return to your normal healthy weight. Do not be discouraged if no effects are immediate. Be patient and stay with it and you will come out on top.

GENERAL EXERCISES

Exercise 1.

Position: Lying on back with body well relaxed.

Action: Expand the chest, pulling it well up and letting the abdomen become hollow. Count six, then make the chest small pushing down and making the abdomen large, and count two.

Remarks: Do this three to five times with-

out breathing; then take several slow, long, deep breaths. Repeat this exercise from fifteen to twenty times.

Exercise 2.

Position: Stand erect, with hands resting on hips.

Action: Stationary run with high knee action, that is, bring your knees up well in front of you and landing on the balls of the feet.

Exercise 3.

Position: Stand erect with hands resting on hips.

Action: Draw right knee to chest and squeeze with both arms. Raise on toe of left foot. Replace right leg and continue exercise by repeating with left leg. An alternate compression and stretching movement is given to the abdominal organs.

Exercise 4.

Position: Lying on back with hands tightly closed on shoulders.

Action: Lift the chest and take a deep breath. Put your head back then bend body to the right; then stretch left arm forward and right arm sideways. Stretch vigorously; exhale and return to normal position. Repeat to the left side.

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Remarks: This is an excellent first exercise in the morning workout. It can be done while lying in bed. Yawn, stretch, and grunt as much as you wish for the circulation is stimulating.

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect, hands on hips.

Action: Bend forward very slowly, hinging only at hips while keeping back straight and face to front. Bend low enough so that back is parallel with floor. Return to normal position slowly.

Remarks: You will not like this exercise at first, but it is a very helpful exercise.

Exercise 6.

Position: Lying on floor, hands by sides, legs straight.

Action: Draw the right knee to the chest and exhale. As right knee is returned to its normal position, the left knee is drawn to the chest.

Exercise 7.

Position: Stand erect with chest up, chin in.

Action: Bend or sway from side to side, moving only from the hips. The arms should wave loosely like the branches of a tree.

Exercise 8.

Position: Stand erect with hands resting on hips.

Action: Raise the right knee until at right angles with the body, toes pointing towards the floor. Extend foot forward until knee is straight, and stretch. Return leg to normal position and repeat with left leg.

Exercise 9.

Position: Lying on back on floor, hands on sides, legs straight.

Action: Arch the body upward forming a bridge with the weight resting on the heels and shoulders.

Exercise 10.

Position: Stand erect with hands on hips.

Action: Bend right and reach towards the floor or ground. Reverse movement to the left.

Remarks: In reaching towards the floor bring the hand to the knee at first, and then with each successive time bend a little lower until the ground is reached.

Exercise 11.

Position: Feet apart, arms sides shoulder level.

Action: Twist the body to the right side. Bend slightly forward, keeping the knees

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straight and touch the right foot with the left hand. The right being stretched straight up over body towards the ceiling. Exhale and draw abdomen well in. Repeat exercise, twisting the body to the left side and touching left foot with right hand.

Exercise 12.

Position: Lie on back in form of a cross with arms extended.

Action: Carry right foot up to the left until it touches the left hand. Repeat, using left foot and touching right hand.

Remarks: A difficult variation of this exercise may be done by doing the exercise in a standing position.

Exercise 13.

Position: Body erect, hands on hips, feet apart with knees straight.

Action: Bend to the right, then to the left, then forward, then backward. Do not bend too far backward. Repeat this exercise about a dozen times.

Exercise 14.

Position: Lying on back with arms above head on the floor, keeping knees straight.

Action: Assume a sitting position and touch toes with hands; exhale. Return to sitting position, keeping abdomen in; then slowly

return to normal position, stretch and inhale deeply.

Exercise 15.

Position: Feet together, standing with hands above head.

Action: Twist the body to the left side, place the left hand on the hip, and with the body in that twisted position touch the outside of the left heel with the right hand and exhale. Return to normal position and repeat to the right side.

Remarks: Knees should be straight during the entire exercise. It may be impossible to touch the heel, but stretch as far as possible. In returning to the normal position, bring the hand out and up.

THE CORRECTION OF UNDERWEIGHT OR MALNUTRITION

Underweight is of two types; first, pathological, or that kind associated with disease, and second, physiological.

In the pathological type is found the danger sign which is apt to be an actual loss of weight though it may be inability to gain. Any loss of weight which is sudden or gradual should be investigated immediately by a competent physician.

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Normal underweight, that is twenty percent below the normal weight, is more desirable than the same degree of overweight, because underweight persons as a class, live longer and are healthier than the overweight class.

CAUSES OF UNDERWEIGHT

1. Defects that are commonly found in the individual such as decayed teeth, infected tonsils, adenoids, etc.

2. Failure of following proper health habits.

3. Inability to digest and assimilate food.

4. Dietary errors such as too many sweets, irregular eating, fast eating, washing down the food with water or drink, insufficient breakfast, too long a time between meals, poor diet.

5. Hereditary tendency to a slight body build.

6. Constant worry often causes underweight. This cause should never be overlooked.

7. Late hours, lack of exercise, dissipation, and general errors in living.

If the degree of underweight is over twenty percent from the standard there may be a decided handicap causing lack of endurance, energy, etc. In order to alter this condition, five things should be done: first, immediate physical examination by a competent physician

to determine that no disease is causing underweight. Second, plenty of rest and sleep is needed. Third, a correct diet should be given by the physician and the following out of that diet. This is a big factor. Spinach, lettuce, turnip are essential to good health. Four proper exercises.

It must be remembered that normal underweight itself, unless extreme, is desirable from a standpoint of longevity. If it is dangerous or the pathological type, it should be corrected immediately.

Physical education prescribes for the underweight individual the following program: A, proper diet. B, plenty of sleep. C, no smoking. D, light exercise. E, fresh air and sunshine. F, no tea or coffee. G, plenty of milk. H, nourishing food regularly. I, plenty of water. J, massage. K, daily bowel movement. L, avoidance of fatigue and worry. M, a daily bath. N, plain food should be eaten. O, cleanliness.

It is well to rest fifteen minutes before eating and fifteen minutes or longer immediately after. Lie down, close the eyes and relax. Forget everything, especially work. This rest before eating aids the body in preparing itself

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for food, and resting after the meal helps the body to send more blood to the digestive tract.

For building up a definite group of muscles slow tensing exercises are given with the antagonistic muscles acting as resistance to the movement. However, it must be remembered that proper rest and diet rank on a par with exercise for the under nourished individual. Given the right dosage of exercise, stopping before the point of fatigue is reached, will develop the individual because of the better circulation, respiration, and elimination. An over dose of exercise for the individual who is undernourished will cause an actual burning up of the body tissues and a building up which is not enough to offset the loss.

Walking is an excellent exercise for it increases the respiration, whips up the circulation, and promotes better elimination. Good posture is absolutely necessary so as to give the vital organs a chance to work without interference.

Hydrotherapy is often used for its tonic effect. A vigorous, dry rub with a coarse, cold, wet towel varying from 60 degrees F and ending at 40 degrees F will increase the circulation and give a good tonic reaction. Sun

baths are also recommended, especially if the person is anemic.

Before going into exercises it must be remembered that it is not good policy to work the body until a point of fatigue is reached, but rather to lightly stimulate the body so that when nourishment is taken the body will be receptive and the nourishment will be assimilated much more readily.

SPECIAL EXERCISES FOR THE CORRECTION OF UNDERWEIGHT

Exercise 1.

Position: Body erect, hands at sides.

Action: Raise arms sideways to shoulder level, raise arms over head, stretch toward ceiling, raise on toes and inhale. Return arms to side slowly and exhale.

Exercise 2.

Position: Lying on back with body well relaxed.

Action: Expand the chest, pulling it well up and letting the abdomen become hollow. Count six, then make chest small, pushing down and making abdomen large, and count two.

Remarks: Do this three to five times without breathing; then take several slow, long,

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deep breaths. Repeat this exercise for fifteen or twenty minutes.

Exercise 3.

Position: Hands on hips, body erect.

Action: The body should be raised first on toes, and then by bending the knees, the body should be lowered. Keep back perpendicular to the floor. Go through exercise slowly.

Exercise 4.

Position: Lying on back, knees bent, hands at sides.

Action: Slowly raise arms toward ceiling and overhead in line with body, reach in line with body and inhale. Return arms to normal position slowly exhaling. Keep abdomen in and chest up.

Exercise 5.

Position: Body erect, hands clasped behind neck, elbows extended well back.

Action: Bend neck backward as far as possible keeping chin in. Inhale deeply throwing shoulders back. Return to normal position and exhale.





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